

Chapter 371 - A Facade

Lanni's apartment.

After leaving the hospital, Lanni was still restless. Even so, the biggest crisis had been averted; Ruby could no longer use the trick of pretending to be pitiful to get close to Xiehan.

Xiehan, who was staying for dinner, was curious when he had her let out sigh after sigh. "Are you still thinking about Ruby?"

She nodded, not denying it. "Failing is one thing, but what if she gets back up and comes up with some other trick? It's not easy to constantly keep an eye on someone, right?"

In response, he looked deep in thought before he glanced at her and set aside the magazine he was reading. "I've been meaning to say this, we seem to have misunderstood Ruby."

"What are you saying?" She was surprised that he could even come up with such a statement after all that had happened. Wasn't her confession clear enough?

He knew what she was thinking so he explained, "I mean, her actions and words are questionable. However, there's something off about the way she looks at me. We all think she has that kind of feelings for me but from my observation, her gaze is nothing like a girl in love. Instead, it's as though she is looking at a close relative that she doesn't know how to converse with."

"Have you been charmed by her?" Lanni was speechless by the nonsense he was spouting. What exactly made him come to such a conclusion? Did he think that just because he didn't have feelings for Ruby, it was the same for her?

The man shrugged, ignoring what she had just said. "Besides, from a man's perspective, I think she likes Lin Jian. There is no way a woman will be in love with two men, is there?"

"That's a facade." Lanni dismissed. This wasn't the first time she had heard that. In fact, Ruby had said it herself, that she was in love with Lin Jian and was merely afraid that he was too much of a playboy. However, "It could be just an act to cover up her true intentions. Also, who said a woman cannot be in love with two men? Not many people accept it but it's quite common."

Luckily, a call from Xingyu interrupted them before their conversation could turn stale.

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Lanni was not the only person who thought that Ruby's feelings for Lin Jian were an act meant to cover up for her true intentions.

When Ruby called Lin Jian out for a meal the next day, he was reluctant to go. When he learnt that Ruby's illness was fake, he was so disappointed that he wanted nothing to do with her.

However, the girl kept insisting so he had no choice but to go.

"What do you want?" He asked as soon as he got to the restaurant they were meeting at.

Ruby frowned and bit her tongue. His attitude was identical to how he usually treated his women when he was tired of playing around and wanted to dump them. Something in her eyes dimmed.

"I merely wanted to have a chat. You asked me to go to the movies with you before, but I was busy so I promised to go when I'm less busy. How about we go this weekend? I don't have much going on." She spoke like she didn't mind his dismissive attitude.

When Lin Jian heard her, he scoffed. "Ruby, do you think I'm a fool?"

Because Lanni and Xiehan have found out your plot, you want to cling onto me and use it as proof of you not having any ulterior motives?"

"What? What are you saying?" She was stunned. Although her father had advised her to stay away from the Jis for a while, this was not her reason for meeting up with Lin Jian! It was only because she felt empty and needed a distraction.

Fine, her aim was still selfish.

Lin Jian looked her up and down, almost in disgust. "I have nothing against a woman pursuing the man she likes, but pretending to be innocent while trying to ruin other people's relationship is too much! You..."

Ruby couldn't stand it anymore. "Enough! Why do you all think the same way? Why do you all claim that I'm trying to ruin Xiehan's relationship by seducing him? Are you insane?! Why would I seduce my own b..."

She calmed herself down before the word "brother" got out of her mouth.

She cursed herself. How could she lose control that way? This was a public restaurant. What would happen if someone heard her? If anyone knew that she had found out the truth about her identity, not just her, but the whole Ji family might be in danger. Hence, she took a deep breath and stopped talking.

However, Lin Jian was still stunned from her suddenly explosive attitude. He sat down and looked at her curiously. "Your own what?"

Meanwhile, the only possibility he thought of was 'boyfriend'. Could it be that she was about to say that Xiehan was her boyfriend? Was that why she was trying so hard to get close to him?

Wait. Was Xiehan two-timing and secretly keeping Ruby as his girlfriend behind Lanni's back?

His first reaction was not to be heartbroken that the girl he liked was taken, but to be angry with his friend. He wouldn't be such a jerk, would he? After all, even he, the renown playboy, was not a two-timer. The main point was, it would be shocking if Xiehan turned out to be that kind of man. In the next instant, he shook his head. Xiehan was definitely not that type of man.

While his brain ran wild with more possibilities, Ruby softly spoke up. "My best friend's man. You see, Lanni used to be my friend before she lost her memory but because I was close to Ji Feifei, she doesn't trust me anymore. Even so, I still think of her as my friend."

Lin Jian found nothing wrong with her response, but he was curious. "Why then, were you close with Ji Feifei? You knew what kind of person she was, didn't you?"

Ruby's eyes dimmed slightly. How could she say that all she had wanted was to slowly get close to her real family through the impostor, Ji Feifei? More importantly, she had always wanted to revenge against Ji Feifei for shamelessly taking her identity. After all, since it was a conspiracy, then Ji Feifei must have already been told that she was not the Jis' biological daughter. Besides, she even once seduced Xiehan; it must be because she was aware that he was not her biological brother—but that didn't make it any less disgusting.

In front of Lin Jian, Ruby could only cook up another reason. "She was Lanni's friend first. I just wanted to make friends, not knowing what kind of person she truly was."

For some reason, Lin Jian still wanted to be close to Ruby—even after knowing that she had been lying all along, and even while knowing that she was still lying for the most part right now. At least one thing seemed true coming from her; her lack of feelings for Xiehan. It was a relief, if he was to be honest.

When he saw how anxious she looked after answering his question, how her beautiful eyes drooped like she was waiting for a verdict that decided her life or death, his heart melted.

In the end, he couldn't bring himself to cut off all ties with her like he had planned. What was wrong with him?! Since when was it difficult to cut off ties with a girl?!

He coughed to stabilise his emotions. "Xingyu and his fiancée are planning to go to the beach, and they invited me to go along. Do you want to come with us?"

Before she could answer him, he knew that she might be awkward around Lanni and Xiehan after what had happened so he added, "It won't be just the four of us. I'm guessing Luna will definitely call her sister and Cheng Yu over."

Ruby looked a little troubled when she recalled how hostile Luna was to her. She timidly asked, "Will Xiaoshi go too?" Xiaoshi was more welcoming of her, besides, it would be a great opportunity to catch up with her cousin.

Lin Jian thought about it. "I'll ask her later. What about you, are you going?"

"Yes." Although she wasn't sure, she couldn't say no under his charming gaze. Never mind. If the others were still hostile towards her, she would simply stick to Lin Jian's side.

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When they got their invites, Lanni and Xiehan decided to take this as a break from work, and Cheng Yu took it as a chance to get away from a certain troublesome person for a while.

When Lanni asked Xiaoshi if she was joining them, the first thing the girl asked was, "Is Xingyu going?"

Lanni nodded honestly. She thought Xiaoshi would choose to go but instead, she shook her head.

"I'm sorry, I'll have to call a raincheck this time.. I'm developing a new software and can only take a break when I'm done."

With just one look, Lanni figured out what the latter was thinking. Being busy was just an excuse to not join in the fun, because Xingyu would go too.

It seemed like the girl had finally decided to stay away from Xingyu and move on. It was for her own good as well as the good of everyone, so Lanni smiled. "When you are done, we can go out for some snacks to celebrate."

"Of course." Xiaoshi didn't look heartbroken anymore.

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At the beach, on Friday.

Xiehan was the first to arrive with Lanni on his private plane. They went to Xiehan's beach manor.

Lanni looked around the spacious living room as Xiehan lugged in their luggage. "Whoa! I didn't expect the place to be so luxurious. And it's so clean for a place you don't occupy that often."

Xiehan let a servant take the luggage to the master bedroom as he responded, "When we were younger, Xingyu, Jian and I would always come to the beach every summer. We didn't want to keep staying at the hotel every time we came over so I decided to buy a manor instead."

Lanni twirled excitedly. "Then I'll take advantage and come often. The others aren't here yet?" because the manor had enough rooms, they would all stay together during this period.

Xiehan shook his head. "I'm sure Xingyu will be the last to arrive."

Lanni chuckled in agreement. That guy was doing everything at the speed of a snail lately, just to ensure that he was cautious enough not to upset their unborn baby.

Just as they spoke, an announcement filled the atmosphere. "Guess who's here!"

Lanni shook her head. "Do we even need to guess?"

When she set her eyes on Lin Jian's get up, she was speechless. Just when she thought that the guy's limit of bizzare dressing was his get up for their celebration dinner several months ago, the man set yet a lower limit for aesthetic tastes. This time, he wore a colorful shirt with at least a thousand little flowers of all colors, and paired it with bright-colored shorts. He even had a silver colored spiky chain around his neck and a silver earring.

"Even if you know that you are handsome, you cannot insult our eyes like that!" She lacked words to describe his twisted sense of fashion.

"You think I'm handsome? That's an honor!" He grinned as he leaned over to Lanni and pointed at his face.

"Is that your main point?" Lanni chuckled, then glanced at Ruby who was sticking to his back and trying to make her presence as scarce as possible.

It was rare to see such a proud girl act so embarrassed, but she had nothing to say about it.

"You're finally here. Miss Xing will show Ruby to her room." Xiehan finally spoke up, glaring at his friend for acting flirtatious around his girlfriend.

As soon as his words were out, a middle aged housekeeper walked over. "This way, Miss Chan."

Ruby looked relieved, and immediately followed her upstairs.

"Damn! Why would you do that? Are we still friends?!" Lin Jian instantly complained about the serious-faced Xiehan. He had been planning to trick Ruby into staying in the same room as him, but Xiehan had ruined it all!

"Stop playing with women's hearts." Xiehan frowned as he warned.

"Who said I was playing with her heart?" Lin Jian mumbled, but Xiehan had already grabbed Lanni's hand and pulled her away.

As they went upstairs, Lanni couldn't help sneaking glances at him with an interesting expression. "Since when did you care about Lin Jian playing around?"

Xiehan frowned and started unpacking their things, not answering her question.

She went ahead to tease, "It's only because it's Ruby, right?"

He stiffened at her words and was about to explain when he found that even he couldn't explain himself. He was about to say something when she added, "You sounded so protective back there... If I didn't know any better, I would think Ruby was your little sister and as her brother, you were telling off the jerk who might break her fragile heart."

He looked up at her playful face with a slight laugh. "What weird-themed movies have you been watching lately? It's just that girls' hearts are meant to be treasured, not broken like it means nothing. It's something every man should know."

Lanni gazed at him as she leaned against the doorframe, suddenly letting her imagination run wild. If they ever had a daughter, just how much would he spoil her?

Seeing his girlfriend's love-strike face, Xiehan didn't dare to ask what she was thinking about. She must be imagining wild things.

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Later, everyone else arrived.



It was quite a large group with Lanni, Xiehan, Xingyu, Luna, Lin Jian, Ruby, Cheng Yu and Cedric—who had forcefully followed Cheng Yu.

When Luna saw him, she couldn't help teasing her friend. "You said you wanted to use this as a break from seeing him every day, yet you dragged him along!"

"Urgh... Like I would drag problems along." Cheng Yu looked so angry she could puke blood. She had decided to come on a commercial flight, but when Cedric accidentally saw her ticket when he went to her office the previous day, he "accidentally" tore it and crumbled it beyond recognition, then he offered to drop her off on one of his family's private planes as compensation.

Just the thought of it was infuriating.

"So that was what happened." Luna smiled when she heard the explanation. "But why does it sound so far-fetched?"

"Because you won't believe me no matter how I explain it." Cheng Yu ignored her and went to the kitchen to grab a drink.

Seeing his companion leave the room, Cedric, who was pretending to play on his phone, rushed to follow her. "Yu."

Cheng Yu felt her head hurt. "Why are you following me?! Didn't you only come to drop me off? I'm here, safe and sound. You can leave now." She roared.

Cedric recoiled a few steps and looked like a shivering puppy. "Yu, you're scary... I only wanted to keep you company for a while..."

"I don't need it. Leave!" She snarled.

In response, the guy's beautiful eyes drooped sadly like a pet abandoned by its owner, as he made small steps out of the kitchen.

Cheng Yu took a deep breath. "Fine. You can stay. But keep your distance away from me and don't spout any nonsense, okay?"

"Yes!" Cedric's eyes regained their brightness and he did a happy jump. In the end, acting pitiful proved to work. Cheng Yu just couldn't stand to see him sad.

Speaking of which, women were only unable to stand seeing a man sad if they cared about them. Didn't that mean Cheng Yu cared about him? If that was the case, then why was she still pushing him away?

He wanted to ask but remained silent. Never mind. If he asked right now, she might just kick him out.

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When they saw Cedric leave the kitchen happily, Lanni and Luna exchanged glances.

"Do you think Xiao Yu kissed him?" Luna whispered to her sister, who chuckled under her breath.

"He looks so happy, maybe he did get lucky."

When Cheng Yu returned, she noticed that everyone was giggling while stealing glances at her. "What's wrong with all of you?" She had a feeling their thoughts were running in directions they shouldn't be.

Lin Jian coughed. "Nothing. We were just thinking that we should probably play a few games?"

"Good idea." Xiehan immediately seconded. They were staying in to rest today and would only go out on the next day. However, the atmosphere was tense with two pairs of enemies in the same room.

Ruby was practically sticking onto Lin Jian and keeping as much distance from Lanni as possible, while Cedric and Xingyu were glaring daggers at each other every time their eyes met. Luckily, Xiaoshi had decided not to come, or else she, Luna and Cheng Yu would be breathing hate at each other too.

Thinking of it as the perfect way to lighten the atmosphere, Xingyu went along. "What should we play? How about a competition instead? We just happen to be hungry so we can get to see who the best cook is. We can pair up with our companions."

"Leave that to us ladies. The men can contest on something else." Cheng Yu quickly spoke up when she remembered what a horrible kitchen wrecker Cedric was.

Cedric looked at her gratefully. He wouldn't have to embarrass himself.

Meanwhile, Lanni gave her friend a deadly glare. Just when she was about to do a happy dance about winning even before they started! Whatever she wasn't so bad in the kitchen herself.

"But Luna is pregnant. I'm sure Xingyu won't let her into the kitchen." Lin Jian gloated.

Luna glanced sideways at him like he was an idiot. "Shouldn't you be worrying about yourself? I bet your Ruby can't even boil water."

Everyone laugh ed at him, while Ruby was stunned. How did Luna know that?

## Chapter 373 - Contest

Luna's gaze met with Ruby's, and the former smiled. "Are you puzzled? I looked you up."

Ruby frowned. Why did these sisters like looking her up? Even so, she didn't want to create trouble for herself so she shut her mouth.

Knowing what she was thinking, Luna explained, "That was long ago, when I realized that you were trying to get close to my sister despite being Ji Feifei's friend. Of course, I'm not going to let people of questionable character near my sister."

Lanni shot a look at her sister. "Enough, Luna. It's a joyous occasion." Although what she was saying was right, Ruby must be feeling awkward so everything they said might sound like they were reprimanding her.

"Fine, fine. Let's go to the kitchen then."

"I'll go on your behalf." Xingyu immediately offered. Before anyone could call him out for being unfair, he pointed out, "My wife cannot handle such dangerous things as fire and knives in her condition. Please excuse us."

The other men could only bite their tongues, wishing they could substitute their women.

As they racked their brains for excuses, Xiehan beat them to it. "Excuse me, my girlfriend is delicate, so I will substitute her."

Lanni smiled sweetly.

Everyone was speechless.

"What kind of excuse is that?!" Xingyu had no words to describe his friend's excuse. Could it be that there was no better excuse so he resorted to using this?

Just as they racked their brains for words to use to rebut him, Lin Jian spoke up and declared, "Ruby can't go to the kitchen. She is so precious, who will bear the blame if she got injured? Neil Chan will kick my butt."

He pretended to be pitiful and Ruby looked at him gratefully. She wouldn't have to make a fool out of herself anymore. But did Lin Jian know how to cook?

" Well..." Cedric started.

"Don't you dare!" Cheng Yu stared him down before he could get another word out. Substitute her? Was he trying to embarrass her?!

The whole room roared in laughter.

Cedric remained silent, inwardly sobbing on his own after being shouted at.

In the end, Xiehan, Cheng Yu, Xingyu and Lin Jian made their way to the kitchen. The others were curious, so they followed them, using "cheering their partners on" as an excuse. They stood to one side and watched as the contestants decided what to cook.

After a long battle of thoughts, Xingyu decided to deep fry chicken thighs, Cheng Yu chose to cook what she was best at, sweet and sour pork ribs, while Xiehan chose to cook mushroom pasta, and the remaining meat dishes.

"Let Lin Jian cook the vegetables." Cheng Yu said, kindly choosing the easiest option for him.

Lin Jian looked at him gratefully and rolled up his sleeves. "I got this!"

Even so, Lanni giggled at the side. Could he really do it?

Cedric thought he had been spared until Xingyu jeered at him. "Are you going to sit aside with the women and let your princess cook?"

Cheng Yu tilted her head and glared at him. "Shut up. How does that concern you?"

"I'm just saying!" Xingyu shrugged innocently.

Cheng Yu shot him a warning look. Despite his feigned innocence, she knew what he was thinking. He must know that she was good in the kitchen so what he said was his lame attempt at eliminating a competitor. Ignoring him, she picked up an apron from the stack that had been brought over by the housekeeper, then draped it over her dress. Tying her hair into a bun, she washed her hands and started preparing the ingredients.

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One hour later.

It was finally time to decide the winner. All the bystanders were to have a taste of all the dishes then vote for the person they thought cooked the best dish.

Lanni went first. She deliberately tasted everything else first before tasting Xiehan's mushroom pasta as the finale. Her expression brightened up. "As expected! My baby is the best cook in the world."

Xiehan proudly patted her shoulder. "I wouldn't disappoint you."

"What nonsense are you saying? Have you ever tasted fried chicken that's this delicious?" Luna immediately countered, having just taken a bite of Xingyu's dish.

Lanni rolled her eyes at her. "What's so good about it? He used an air fryer!" Lanni called out the unfairness.

"That's because I didn't want it to contain any extra oil. I don't need to spell out the reason, do I?" Xingyu looked over at Lanni smugly.

While the two argued, Ruby spoke up after tasting Lin Jian's pickled radishes. "Obviously, my Jian is the winner."

Lin Jian tensed up then hid his face to smile. He was overjoyed that someone had considered him the winner despite his lack of expertise in the kitchen, but what felt more special was what she had called him. 'My Jian', she said?

Ruby seemed to have realized what she had just said and her face flushed crimson. She wanted to say something to redeem herself but knowing that it would only serve to further deepen the misunderstanding, she coughed and served herself more vegetables.

Everyone who was preparing to pick on Lin Jian for doing nothing but stir-frying a few vegetables and bringing ready-made pickled vegetables onto the dining table, but they didn't dare to ruin the magical moment.

Cedric frowned when he tasted everyone's cooking. "What's the point of this contest? Everyone knows that Yu cooks best."

He was not wrong, there really was no point in the whole contest because for something as vague as cooking skills, everyone would choose their own partner as the winner out of love—and survival instinct.

After enjoying their feast, everyone started feeling lazy. They had already been exhausted from having travelled from B City.

When she felt sleepy, Luna snuggled to Xingyu and fell asleep against his shoulder.

With a dotting smile, he took her in his arms gently. "My wife is sleepy, so we will make a move first. Excuse us."

"Go, go. Don't flaunt your love to us now." Cheng Yu pressed a hand against her chest like her single soul had been wounded.

When she saw her friend's reaction, Lanni turned her head from the game she was playing on her phone and looked at Cedric, then Cheng Yu. "Why would you still be acting like a single girl when there is a man right beside you, one who likes you?"

Cheng Yu froze, then she turned aggressive as cracked her knuckles, shooting daggers in Lanni's direction. "Come here! I promise I won't kill you!"

"Xiehan, help!" Lanni climbed onto the couch that Xiehan was sitting on and clung to him like her life was in danger.

The man, who was chatting casually with Lin Jian, held his girlfriend and glared daggers at Cheng Yu.

The latter retreated mournfully. "Fine. You have someone to protect you, so you can tease me all you want."

Lanni made a funny face at her and dunked into Xiehan's arms.

At the side, Ruby watched what was happening with a listless smile. She was not jealous of Lanni for being doted on by Xiehan, but if only her brother could acknowledge her.. . Even if he didn't love her a tenth of how much he loved Lanni, she would be happy if they were on good terms.

Xiehan felt her gaze on him and looked over. She smiled gently, then tapped Lin Jian and whispered something to him.

Xiehan was thunderstruck. That smile... Why did it look like his mother's?

As soon as the thought registered itself, he shook it off. It must be because of what Lanni teasingly said about him acting like a protective brother to Ruby, that he was now starting to have bizarre hallucinations.

At that moment, Lanni rubbed her eyes and shifted in his arms. Knowing that she must be sleepy, he stood up and took her hand. "We will go up now."

Cheng Yu knew that she would soon be left alone with Cedric so she fled. "I woke up early today so I have to catch on some sleep."

Lanni, Xiehan, Ruby and Lin Jian all laughed at Cedric yet again. Just as he was looking forward to spending some alone time with her, she had taken flight even before his plan could come into action.



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Xiehan put Lanni to sleep and was just about to join her when his phone rang. To avoid disturbing her sleep, he stepped out to pick the call at the mezzanine.

He was just done speaking when the door beside the master bedroom opened. He looked over to see Ruby, wearing a long, silk nightgown. She smiled when she saw him. "Xiehan?"

He looked at her, his expression unknowingly turning gentle. "You're not sleeping. Are you having trouble falling asleep in an unfamiliar room?"

Ruby was stunned. This was the first time he was not ignoring her. Knowing that she would have wasted this chance if he walked out on her, she decided to go straight to the point. "I have something important to tell you."

This was not the first time she was saying this, so Xiehan frowned slightly.. "Go ahead."

## Chapter 374 - Sleep Together

Ruby was prepared for Xiehan to coldly say no and walk away, so his words took her by surprise. It took a while for her to recover from her shock and when she did, she started racking her brains for the right words to use to break this kind of news.

Unlike all the other times, he waited patiently for whatever she had to say. On one hand, he had a feeling that it really was something important, or else she wouldn't keep bugging him despite what had

happened before. On the other hand, he knew that if she didn't speak up today, she would still look for him later.

"What do you want to say?" He probed when a few minutes passed in silence.

She took in a deep breath, then looked around briefly to ensure that no one was around. Although they were probably the only people awake at this moment, she was still not fully assured. The walls had ears. "If it's not troublesome, could we talk later? It's something... no one else should know."

Afraid that he might misunderstand her, she quickly clarified, "It's about Ji Feifei, and if you're afraid that Lanni might misunderstand our meeting, you can tell her. But only her."

Xiehan had an interesting expression. Why did she look so panicked? He suddenly had the urge to say something to reassure her, but he didn't in the end. He simply nodded. "Let's talk about it tomorrow."

"Mmh." She retreated to her room happily. She was bound to have a sleepless night from anticipation.

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That night, Ruby was not the only one having a sleepless night.

A while ago, Cheng Yu was shown to her room by Lin Jian, the jerk.

Knowing that the man before her was an idiot, her first reaction was to glare him down sternly. "You better not do anything fishy."

She was still speaking when she noticed a familiar black leather suitcase on the bed. That was not hers but...wasn't that Cedric's suitcase? She lifted her head to glower at Lin Jian.

The latter obviously knew what she was thinking and hurried to defend himself. "I didn't have a choice! This is the only room left."

Cheng Yu harrumphed and crossed her arms, looking at him threateningly. "Do you think I'm an idiot?"

"No, of course not! Why would I think such a thing?" Lin Jian waved his hands quickly, his face looking innocent as he explained, "There are indeed many rooms in this mansion, but many of them are servants' rooms and others are undergoing renovation so they cannot be used. The only usable rooms are these few."

As if trying to redeem himself, he quickly added, "I thought I was going to sleep in the same room with Ruby but I miscalculated, so there is one room less than I thought. You may have to put up with this for these few days."

Cheng Yu looked at Cedric's suitcase and frowned when she imagined herself sharing a room with a man she had no ties with. Feelings of no feelings, it was still a little too overboard to sleep together when they were not in any kind of relationship. She raised her hand to massage her temple.

Seeing her stressed look, Lin Jian tried to redeem the situation. "You both will be asleep anyways, nothing will happen."

He thought he had said the right thing, but all he did was worsen the situation. Cheng Yu checked the time on her phone. "I will book a room at a hotel. You can go back to your room now."

"No, no don't!" He anxiously jumped in her way. He had promised to do Cedric a favor by creating an opportunity for sparks to fly between him and Cheng Yu. If she left now, all his effort would go to waste. Realizing that he had overreacted and Cheng Yu was giving him a weird look, he placed a fist by his mouth and coughed lightly.

"Well, you can indeed book a hotel room, however, business is at its peak now and it's pretty hard to get a room in any hotel. Not to mention, they are very far away from here. How can you go on your own? Let's not talk about how unsafe it is for a girl to stay at a hotel room on her own, who is to say that you will get there safely in the first place? Countless cases of robbery and murder have been reported around this area."

The man looked serious and even a little scared as he rumbled on reasons why she shouldn't go, evoking a fear in the depth of her heart.

Seeing that she was starting to waver, he whipped out his phone with a helpless expression and opened a folder. "Look, one of my subordinates sent me this. It's an article that will be published by Oracle Daily—a magazine under Lin Media Group— tomorrow. It's about a family that was murdered in cold blood last night...how tragic..."

Cheng Yu was so frightened by the news that she didn't dare to go and take a look.

This was within Lin Jian's expectations, and he was glad that she didn't dare to check it out. Because despite the article being true, the case did not take place anywhere near the beach, but in a different city. However, he didn't say anything about the tragedy happening when the family was on their way to the hotel—she had imagined it herself—so technically, he did not lie to her.

He waited for the fear to work its charm and it really did. Cheng Yu shook her head in panic. "I won't go."

He smiled. Cedric owed him one this time. Before he could finish his mental celebration, she added angrily, "However, I will not spend the night with him! He can sleep in your room or anywhere else."

As soon as she finished speaking, she shoved him out of the room, catching him off guard, and shut the door.

Lin Jian was speechless.

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Cheng Yu took a shower and changed into her nightdress, then climbed onto the huge bed. She was sleepy before but now, she couldn't fall asleep no matter how many sheep she counted. She kept tossing uneasily.

Lin Jian had said earlier that there was no other available room. Where would Cedric sleep?

On the couch in the living room? She didn't even dare to imagine that. Such a spoiled young master, how could he sleep on a couch?

She shook her head in the next moment. Served him right. No one invited him anyway, he forcefully tagged along.

But even so, she shouldn't be so heartless as to let him spend the night so uncomfortably, right?

She was still battling her thoughts when she heard a soft knock, followed by the soft call of her name. She got off the bed and opened the door, only to see Cedric standing there.

"You..." She was unsure what to say to him.

Cedric spoke first with a smile. "Can I take a change of clothes?"

She wordlessly stood to one side and let him in. He didn't do anything aside from open his suitcase and take out a set of well-folded clothes including pajamas, a blue translucent box with toiletries neatly arranged inside, and a phone charger. Mentally checking his list, he dug into the suitcase and took a white towel then shoved everything he had prepared into a smaller bag.

He then slung the bag over his shoulder and patted his pockets to ensure he had carried his wallet.

She watched everything at the side, until he passed by her with a smile. "Goodnight."

Just as he walked through the door, she felt a tug at her heart and grabbed her hand before her brain could stop her. He turned to look at her suspiciously.

"Where will you sleep?" She asked. From what he had gathered, she could guess that he was not planning to spend the night within the mansion.

He shifted the weight of the bag to one side and kept a nonchalant smile. "There is a hotel nearby."

Cheng Yu felt guilty. He was lying. Lin Jian had already said that the nearest hotel was several kilometres away. He was saying this just so she would not worry about him. But, "The security around here is horrible. You can't go out on your own."

Contrary to all the other times when he would readily switch to acting pitiful, he followed Lin Jian's advice this time.

The man's exact words were, "Although women's hearts are tender, and her heart might soften if you act pitiful, women generally prefer a man who is reliable."

Thinking about it, he dropped the act this time. "It's alright. I will take a cab there and besides, I know quite a few moves in case I need to fight."

Hearing this, Cheng Yu felt even guiltier. She shook her head in disapproval. "You... You can stay here." She was about to ask him to sleep on the floor but changed her mind. "Never mind.. The bed is quite big, it's alright as long as you keep to your space."

## Chapter 375 - Another Way In

Cedric was overjoyed, but he pretended to be troubled. "But... Wouldn't that trouble you too much?"

Cheng Yu rolled her eyes. "If I say it troubles me, what will you do?"

"It won't! He quickly returned into the room and unpacked his bag before she could change his mind. He even speedily changed into his silk pajamas and stood beside the bed. Cheng Yu was speechless.

She was wondering whether he would really keep to his side when she realized that he didn't look like he was planning to sleep on the bed. Instead, he took a pillow and placed it on the carpeted floor and lied down.

"You..." Cheng Yu scratched her head in embarrassment. "Sleep on the bed. I'll take the floor."

However, the man did not react. She leaned over to take a peek and found that he had already closed his eyes and was breathing slowly and steadily. Seeing as he had already fallen asleep, she shrugged and climbed onto the bed. Despite the presence of someone else in the room, she was probably too tired so she quickly drifted into a deep sleep.

About half an hour later.

When he was sure that the girl had fallen asleep, Cedric opened his eyes and peeked at her. She looked so cute...

Seeing that she had already kicked the blanket away, he chuckled and got up, then covered her.

"With these bad sleeping habits, she will probably roll off the bed and fall. Nevermind, I should sleep next to her to guard her." He thought, then lay next to her.

Fine, he simply wanted an excuse to sleep next to her.

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The next morning.

Cheng Yu yawned when she woke up. That was the most peaceful sleep she had had in a long time. It was as though she was in a warm embrace all night, lulling her to feel safe and comfortable. When she woke up, her first reaction was to dart her eyes to the space beside the bed.

Cedric had already woken up. The pillow was no longer on the floor, he must have already gone downstairs.

Getting up, she grabbed a towel and bathrobe from her clothes and half-sleepily dragged her feet to the bathroom.

But when she opened the door...

Her eyes widened as her jaw dropped, all the sleep clearing off from her eyes. The first thing she saw was a muscular back... a naked, muscular back with water dripping down from his hair all the way down his broad shoulder blades and her first reaction was not to look away but to widen her eyes.

When the door opened, Cedric was shocked and turned reflexively.

She looked away as soon as their eyes met. "Sorry! I thought... I..." She dashed out of the bathroom before she could embarrass herself.

Behind her, the man laughed, intrigued.

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By the time Cheng Yu took a bath and went downstairs, breakfast was ready and everyone was waiting for her.

Everything was normal, but she had a feeling that they were all giving her weird looks and giggling under their breaths.

She ignored them and walked over, wondering where to sit. On the dining table that could fit up to ten people, there were three empty seats between Lanni and Cedric. She naturally wanted to sit next to Lanni but if she deliberately kept her distance from Cedric, she would never hear the end of their teasing. Hence, she shrugged her shoulders and sat next to him.



As if that was what they were all waiting for, they all broke into cheers and teased Cedric. Lin Jian even patted his back and congratulated him for heaven-knows-what.

Cheng Yu was speechless. Was everyone so idle?

"Xiao Yu, how was your night?" Lanni asked as she passed Luna a jug of milk.

Cheng Yu didn't think too much of it and answered honestly, "It was alright. How was yours?"

"Just alright?" Luna darted her gaze over curiously, unknowingly pouring too much milk into her bowl of cereal. It was only when Xingyu took the jug from her that she looked at him gratefully and turned back to Cheng Yu. "Are you tired... Does your waist hurt?"

"No, I'm not tired. And why would my waist hurt?" She asked curiously, then comprehended just what her friend was getting at. Her face flushed. "Luna, you're so dirty-minded!"

The dining room roared in laughter. Cheng Yu silently buttered her bread and ignored the taunts that followed. Jeez, was everyone so corrupt? What made them come to the conclusion that something happened between her and Cedric? While thinking about it, her brain formed the image she had seen in the bathroom earlier... that sexy back...

Because he was still fairly young and with his physique that looked a bit skinny, she never would have thought that his body would look that muscular with no clothes on. He only turned for a brief second but when she caught sight of his chest, she almost had a nosebleed from how seductive it looked.

She shook the thought off her head. When did her thoughts become so corrupt? It must be the effect of staying close to these dirty-minded people.

"What's wrong?" Lin Jian asked Ruby next to him. She had been silent throughout, and didn't even laugh when everyone was making fun of Cedric and Cheng Yu.

She shook her head. "Nothing."

She just wasn't sure how to interact with everyone. More than that, she was scared of Xiehan's reaction later when he learnt that they were siblings. Would he be accepting of her, or would he think she was lying? Actually, all that mattered was that the Ji family found out the truth and prepared themselves for a possible calamity.

Lin Jian saw that she was not willing to talk about whatever was bothering her so he let it be, and passed a de-shelled egg to her. "It's nutritious."

"Thank you." She smiled briefly.

Breakfast went smoothly and when everyone was full, they decided to stay indoors for a while before going to the beach later.

Hence, Xiehan, Lanni and Ruby met in the study.

Ruby was the last to arrive, and she was unsure where to sit so she kept standing. "I'll go straight to the point."

Lanni nodded in approval. That would be for the best. This had dragged on for too long. She would not have come along if it wasn't because Xiehan wanted her to get first-hand information of whatever Ruby was going to say. Obviously, the man was afraid she might misunderstand if he secretly met Ruby on her own.

Trying not to look at Lanni, Ruby looked elsewhere. "The truth is, Ji Feifei is not your sister."

She waited for the news to sink in but neither of them looked surprised. Instead, she was the one who was shocked by this outcome. They knew?

"Just this?" Xiehan's question confirmed her suspicions.

"You... You already know?" She couldn't help asking.

Xiehan's expression didn't change. "I guessed out of logic."

At first, it was merely a guess out of logic—the fact that Ji Feifei did so much to seek their parents' attention, and the absurdity of her boldness while seducing her brother, was too questionable. His guess had been confirmed by a detail that Lanni remembered from her past.

All she remembered was that she had found out something about Ji Feifei and it made the latter want to take her life, but it proved Xiehan's guess right. This was the only thing that someone like Ji Feifei could care about—being stripped of the identity she was so proud of.

"What's this got to do with you anyway?" Lanni asked, then it dawned on her. She suddenly remembered how she had once thought that Ji Meiling's eyes were familiar. Now that she thought about it, it was only because they were quite similar to Ruby's!

In fact, now that she scanned Ruby, she realized that the more she looked at her, the more she found her similar to Xiaoshi, Ji Meiling, Ji Huifen and even Wen Lin. Could it be...

Ruby's next statement confirmed this guess. "Ji Feifei took my place. It was a conspiracy and... I'm your real sister, Xiehan." She went ahead to explain what had happened in the past, and how she needed up as Neil Chan's daughter.

Xiehan was not sure how to immediately react to the news. When Ruby was done speaking, her phone rang so she stepped out to take the call.

Lanni glanced at Xiehan. "Do you believe her? Because I don't."

Xiehan held her hand with her frown. "Of course not. Would you believe anyone who appeared out of nowhere and claimed to be your sibling? Obviously, I'm going to get to the bottom of it."

Even if he thought Ruby could be telling the truth and even if she bore some similarities to his parents, he couldn't blindly bring her to the Ji family.

In a society where plastic surgery was no longer novel, anything was possible. It was in fact, highly possible for this to be a bigger conspiracy.

What if she initially wanted to marry him and get into the Ji family but couldn't, so she found another way in?

When he told Lanni his speculation, she burst into laughter. "That would be a bit overboard, but nothing is impossible.. I'll help you investigate."

#### Chapter 376 - A Stroll By The Beach

When Ruby left the study, she basically stumbled downstairs helplessly. She was sure that based on Xiehan's gaze earlier, he didn't truly believe her. However, it was still alright if he investigated since it would only prove that she was telling the truth.

Just as she took a turn to go to her room, a strong hand dragged her to the side.

"What do you want?" She asked sharply. Lin Jian had almost startled the life out of her.

The man gazed down at her flirtatiously. "Let's take a walk by the beach."

She pulled her wrist from his hand with a frown and leaned against the wall behind her. "Everyone is going together later."

Lin Jian knew this, but he insisted. "Don't you want to take a walk with me... Just the two of us? There is probably no one outside at this time so it will be cool."

Ruby nodded to his persuasion, she needed some time to cool off anyway. Hence, the two of them got changed and made their way out of the house.

Ruby wore a long, white skirt with a crop top, and had a pair of flat sandals on her feet. Lin Jian walked beside her, coincidentally wearing a white shirt and a pair of blue shorts of the same shade as her crop top...

Scratch that. He had seen the clothes she had changed into and deliberately worn a matching outfit.

He looked down at her as she walked beside him, the cool morning breeze fluttering her hair off her face. She suddenly sneezed and rubbed her palms against her arms.

Instantly, he shrugged off his white shirt and placed it on her shoulders.

She looked up at him curiously so he explained, "I don't want you to catch a cold."

She smiled, her cheeks flushing a bit. Although the shirt was thin and couldn't make much of a difference, her heart felt warm. Besides, she almost couldn't hold in her awe when her gaze landed on the shirtless man beside her.

He noticed her gaze and leaned in flirtatiously. "Are you impressed by what you're seeing? You can look for as long as you want—no need to be shy."

As he spoke, he paraded himself for her to have a clearer view of his body.

"Don't be silly!" She pushed him away, her face blushing furiously.

Gazing at her beauty, he slowly inched his hand closer to hers uncertainly. In the next moment, he held her hand in his. She was startled and was about to quickly withdraw her hand but he held onto it tightly. "The beach isn't very safe. You could get bitten by a crab or something... What will I do then?"

Ruby was flabbergasted by his poor excuse. Couldn't he make up a better one? Anyway, she didn't mind holding his hand so she shrugged and let him be.

A smile of satisfaction flashed his face. As a man who was used to charming girls as soon as they saw him, this was the first time he had to work hard to get a girlfriend. Even he couldn't believe that he was being this gentle.

"Are you tired? Do you want me to carry you?" He asked beside her ear. She was yet to respond when he caught sight of a familiar figure strolling behind them from the corner of his eye. Upon closer inspection, he realized that everyone was following behind as well: Cheng Yu was leading the way while Luna, Xingyu and Cedric followed her. Behind them, Lanni and Xiehan were holding hands and laughing joyously.

"You guys are here too?" He asked Cheng Yu, who was the first to catch up to them.

Before Cheng Yu could answer him, Xingyu glared at his friend. "You snuck out on your own. How could you?"

Lin Jian scratched his head and blinked his beautiful eyes, thinking of an excuse. "It was the only chance I could get! An engaged man like you won't understand."

"Go easy on Lin Jian. It's not easy for him to get a chance to be alone with his beauty." Luna said to Xingyu, earning waves of teasing laughter from the rest.

She then glanced at Lin Jian teasingly. "Was there any progress? Tell us, quick!"

Seeing how curious everyone was, Ruby was unsure how to respond. It was already awkward enough when Lin Jian pursued her in broad daylight, but with everyone helping him create sparks between them, it felt complicated.

"Just keep walking! Why do you have so many questions?" Lin Jian placed a hand over her shoulder protectively.

As they walked, they passed by a stall selling ice cream and cold drinks.

"Love, I want to buy some ice cream." Lanni tugged Xiehan's hand like an excited child.

"Mmh." Xiehan patted his pockets. Luckily he had carried his wallet, so he let go of her hand and went to the vendor. He soon returned with two cones of ice cream, one with caramel topping and the other with chocolate topping.

Lanni naturally took the former and licked it with an excited smile. "Thank you! I didn't know you liked chocolate ice cream?"

The man wiped the excess ice cream from the corner of her mouth using his thumb and naturally licked it. "Both are for you."

Lanni was even more excited than a child at this point. "I love you!"

In front of them, Luna eyed her sister's ice cream jealously. She then tapped Xingyu's hand. "Honey, I want ice-cream too."

Xingyu was dreading this. He pinched his nose-bridge helplessly. "No, honey. You can't eat anything that's too cold."

"Oh..." Luna looked miserable, obviously wishing she could get just a tiny bit.

In the end, Xingyu couldn't bear to see her so disappointed, so he walked over to the stall and returned with a cup of yoghurt with a straw slotted in.

Although she couldn't eat ice-cream, she liked yoghurt too so she took it with a smile and tiptoed to kiss his cheek. "You're the best!"

At the side, Lin Jian watched his friends get compliments and kisses for simply buying something so little, and decisively went to the stall as well. He bought chocolate candy and strawberry ice cream, both of which he presented to Ruby.

Not wanting to be left out, Cedric bought ice-cream for Cheng Yu as well, but she shot him a mean look.

Xiehan pressed his lips together and tried not to gloat, while Lin Jian and Xingyu burst into laughter.

Only Lanni was kind enough to explain to the guy, "Xiao Yu doesn't like ice-cream. You can get her strawberry juice instead."

"Oh..." The defeated guy once again cheered up, and hurriedly bought a bottle of strawberry juice. When he returned, he unscrewed the cap and slotted in the straw for her, then presented it nervously.

Cheng Yu shot him a glance. "Don't you get it? I just don't want anything from you."

"He is just trying to make you happy, take it easy on him." Luna came to Cedric's rescue.

"Luna is right. It's just some juice, and you must be thirsty." Lanni went along as she finished the first cone of ice cream.

Ruby was still awkward around everyone, so she remained silent and focused on eating her ice cream, though she was of the same opinion as the twins.

After laughing at him for long enough, Xiehan, Xingyu and Lin Jian finally decided to speak up for him.

"He is always trying to make you happy but all you do is shout at him. Poor guy..." Lin Jian exaggerated.

"Can you really bear to see him so deflated?" Xiehan commented when he received an SOS signal from his girlfriend. Although Xingyu wasn't in the best terms with Cedric, he spoke up a few words on his behalf as well.



Cheng Yu was speechless. These traitors! Under their persuasion, she reluctantly took the bottle.

They continued walking in a single row and chatting happily. Their destination was a resort that the guys had mentioned, where they would have fun all day.

After walking for a while, Luna started slowing down. Wordlessly, Xingyu stopped her, stood in front of her and crouched. "I'll give you a piggyback."

Luna felt her heart melt by how fast he had noticed her tiredness. "Honey, you're so sweet." She climbed onto his back without hesitating. She was wearing shorts so she had nothing to worry about.

Xingyu stood up and walked on steadily. He didn't slow down even with Luna on his back.

A few steps later, Xiehan stopped and directly pulled Lanni onto his back. She adjusted herself and hugged him, resting onto his back comfortably. She smiled and kissed his ear, making them flush instantly.

"I'll throw you into the water if you don't stop." He threatened in a low voice. Hearing his threat, she stiffened and stopped fooling around.

"Do you want a piggyback ride too?" Lin Jian asked Ruby teasingly. She was indeed tired so she nodded and climbed onto his back.

At the side, Cedric looked at Cheng Yu meaningfully, but didn't dare to voice his words.

Seeing that the other men were silently cheering him on, he gathered his courage. "You must be tired so..."

## Chapter 377 - Frogs

"You must be tired after walking for so long so... I can carry you for a while if you don't mind." Cedric offered, almost fainting out of nervousness.

Cheng Yu shook her head as she looked at him. She sighed helplessly. Why was the man still so persistent about acting like a couple with her, even after she had rejected him so many times?

Although this is what she thought, she had already embarrassed him earlier and made him the laughing stock for a while, so she couldn't bring herself to say no to him again. It was just a piggyback ride, and it didn't mean much, right?

Making a mental note to talk to him about it later, she walked behind him. "Just this once."

He joyously supported her onto his back, not sure where to place his hands. Just like Lanni and Luna, she was wearing a pair of shorts that didn't even cover half of her thighs. If his hand came into contact with her skin, would she be offended?

Deciding that she would be even more offended if he supported her by her butt, he pretended to not realize anything and held her thighs, his heart racing when her sweet fragrance wafted into his nostrils as the breeze softly blew. His heart was content. Saying yes to him carrying her meant he was starting to gain her trust.

According to his own observation as well as that of Lin Jian, she did have feelings for him and was merely afraid—probably because their identities were too different. She was probably scared that soon after they got into a relationship, their parents would oppose their union and force them to break up.

Hence, aside from trying to get closer to her, his other aim of coming to this trip was to find a chance to let her know that no one could influence his decisions, and no one would have a say about who he could or could not be with. As for his sister's opposition the last time, that girl was probably spewing nonsense because she was in a bad mood.

"Let's race! The last pair to arrive at the resort are frogs!" Lin Jian proposed a race mischievously and immediately took off with Ruby on his back.

"That's foul!" Cedric complained as he held Cheng Yu tightly and tried to catch up.

"Hold tight!" Xiehan told Lanni, then sprinted and overtook Cedric and Lin Jian within a few seconds. Lanni laughed gloatingly at Lin Jian, who had been defeated at the game he proposed himself.

Behind them, Xingyu gave up without bothering to try. Of the three friends, he had always lost when he, Xiehan and Lin Jian raced since they were kids. The latter had always used this fact to poke fun at him. Seeing that Cedric was quite fast too, he knew that he would lose either way.

The three pairs arrived at the resort, out of breath from laughing at Cedric and Cheng Yu who had fallen on their way here.

By the time Xingyu and Luna arrived, the six of them had already played a few games of poker.

"Ha... Frogs!" Lin Jian pointed a finger at them and laughed like a kid.

The others laughed, while Xingyu gently let Luna off his back. "Babe, do you mind being a frog with me?"

Luna adjusted the hem of her top and smiled at him sweetly. "Of course not my love. We are the sweetest couple whether we are snails or frogs."

"Please stop!" Lanni pretended to close her eyes.

"Come here! We almost grew mould on our butt from waiting for you!" Cheng Yu eagerly waved them over.

For the first time, Ruby spoke up. "Are you sure you were not just hoping for them to come so you don't keep losing?"

Lin Jian held his tummy and laughed so hard that he almost fell off from his chair.

"Nonsense, of course not!" Cheng Yu denied guiltily.

They were playing poker in pairs; with the men being the major players and the women cheering them on and helping them make the right moves. However, both she and Cedric were new to card games so although they had been told the rules, they kept losing no matter how good their cards were.

Hearing Ruby's accusation, Luna had an interesting expression and looked at Xingyu. "Do you know how to play poker?"

Lin Jian answered on his behalf. "This man is a monster. No matter what card or dice games you play, he will always give everyone a run for their money. Even casino gurus are scared of him!"

Everyone finally understood why Lin Jian was laughing at Cheng Yu.

Luna was overjoyed while Lanni clung onto her man's arm. "Is he that good? Love, we cannot lose out to them. He is good, but there are two of us now."

It was Cheng Yu's turn to laugh at Lanni. "Have you forgotten? Luna is practically a genius at card games too. Even I can't tell what psychological tricks she uses..." She realized halfway through her statement that this was yet another reason why she would lose. Urgh... She and Cedric would probably lose again.

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B City.

While her cousin and his friends had fun, Xiaoshi was alone in her new apartment. She didn't have many friends in Country C, and the few friends she had made at work were not close enough for her to ask them out.

She was thinking of using this chance to pay her uncle and aunt a visit but changed her mind. There was something she had always wanted to do and this was probably the best chance.

After looking it up online, she copied a telephone number onto the dial pad of her phone. She closed her eyes and thought about it. Should she really do this? After thinking through the pros and cons, she decided to go through with it.

Holding her breath, she dialled the call.

"Hello, this is Montagne Hospital. How may I be of help?" A woman spoke after picking up the call within three rings.

Her heart raced as she gathered her words. "I would like to book an appointment with Doctor Han Xichen as soon as possible." If this delayed, she might change her mind.

"Please hold." The woman said, then the sound of flipping paper resounded on the other end. Just as Xiaoshi was starting to feel anxious, she spoke again. "Doctor Han is free this afternoon. Is this timing convenient?"

Xiaoshi checked the time. It was already noon, so she had to head over immediately. She had thought that the doctor would be busy and she would have to wait until Monday. Nonetheless, this was much better so she agreed. "Please send me your location."

As soon as the call ended, she took a quick shower and changed her clothes. When she was done, she checked her phone and found that she had received a text message with the location.

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"I'm here to see Doctor Han. I made the appointment on the phone thirty minutes ago." She nervously said to the receptionist when she arrived.

The receptionist looked at her record then back at her. "Miss Yun? Dor Han's office is on the thirteenth floor, the third room to your left."

Xiaoshi nodded her thanks and lifelessly entered the elevator.

When she got to the said office, her attention was caught by the man sitting behind the large white desk. He was wearing a pair of clear glasses and reading a book on his desk seriously. Even from this angle, she could tell that he was breathtakingly handsome.

Han Xichen looked up when he realized that the patient had arrived. He took off his reading glasses and glanced at her. "Are you miss Yun?" When she nodded, he motioned for her to have a seat.

"I want to forget everything. Could you help me erase my memory?" Xiaoshi blurted even before she was settled in her seat, afraid that she would change her mind if she delayed for a second.

The man frowned ever so slightly, clearly taken aback by such a request. He had received countless patients who wanted to recover their memory, but this was the first time he was getting one who wanted her memory erased. "Why do you want your memory erased?"

Xiaoshi shook her head. "Can I not answer that?" As though recalling something, she added, "Is it possible to only forget one person?"

Han Xichen studied her and guessed, "Were you heartbroken?"

Xiaoshi remained silent.

The man muttered something under his breath then repeated his question. "Who are you trying to forget? Is it the man who broke your heart?"

It was not sure what came over Xiaoshi, but she suddenly started bawling her eyes out. Choking on her sobs, she took out a handkerchief from her purse. "Why... Why not me? Am I not pretty enough?"

The girl said many things amid her cries, but this was all he understood.. So she was lovelorn because the man she loved was taken. But wasn't it too much to erase her memory just because of this?

## Chapter 378 - Be Mine

Aside from being a hypnotist, Han Xichen was a psychologist as well. Hence, although he should have done whatever she wanted, he was not going to let her go through with something that could potentially ruin her without trying to convince her against it. Hence, he looked seriously at her. "How old are you?"

"What?" Xiaoshi looked up with tearful eyes. They were talking about something else just now. How did the topic suddenly shift to her age? She gathered herself together and croakily answered, "Twenty."

Han Xichen raised an eyebrow in surprise. She was actually younger than he thought. He had assumed that she was a bit older... no wonder she was so rash.

"You're still so young... and you are very pretty. I'm sure there are countless men who would love to date you. Are you sure you really want to ruin your life for a man who may not even realize that you did it because of him?"

Xiaoshi looked at him hesitantly, her voice lowering into a mumble as she blinked her beautiful, big eyes. "You think I'm pretty?"

"Is that the main point?" Han Xichen was intrigued by this young lady's point of focus.

She nodded to his question, looking at him hopefully.

"Yes you are." He said. "Very pretty."

He would have said the same thing no matter who the patient in front of him was. She knew this too, but her ears flashed when she heard it.

She then looked at him seriously. "Then... can you be my boyfriend?"

"What?" The man was taken aback. One second ago, she was still crying painfully about being ignored by the man she had supposedly loved for years, and the next second she was hitting on him and asking him to be her boyfriend?

Gripping the hem of her blue dress, she nodded nervously and added, "I promise, I am hardworking and understanding. I don't cause unnecessary ruckuses and I don't get jealous easily. Even if I do, I will not do anything to interfere with your life. I will be the best girlfriend and..."

Han Xichen finally realized what was going on. His eyebrows furrowed slightly. Let me guess. Are you trying to prove to yourself that you can move on, or do I happen to coincidentally look a lot like the man you love?"

Xiaoshi widened her eyes in surprise then started scanning him while thinking of Xingyu for comparison. In the end, she shook her head. "No. You look nothing like him. he..." She stopped whatever she was going to say and focused her gaze on him. "So, will you be my boyfriend?"

"I'm sorry." He calmly responded. This was not the first time he was being hit on by a patient. Thanks to his handsomeness, forget about all the doctors and nurses in the hospital who had a crush on him; there were countless patients who pretended to have amnesia just so they could get to see him and hit on him while at it.

However, this was the first time he found it hard to reject a girl.

The girl before him was not herself. He had cast a mild hypnotizing spell on her earlier, so although the effect was not strong, whatever she was blabbering right now was what she really felt. It seemed like deep in her heart, she wanted to grab a random stranger and date him to forget about that man. Poor girl...



When she heard his response, her tears fell like water from a broken dam. "Why?"

"Don't cry..." He coaxed and gave her a handkerchief. "Because I daren't take advantage of your broken state. Besides, I cannot be in any relationship with my patient. I'm sorry."

"Oh..." She sighed. At least it wasn't because he found her deplorable.

"Do you still want your memory erased? You can make a booking and have it done on Monday. If you wish, I can record this conversation just in case you demand an explanation for your memory loss in future." He asked when the effect of hypnosis had completely faded.

She shook her head after giving it some thought. "Forget it."

Han Xichen was satisfied by her answer. Although he was yet to bring out his persuasion skills, this was the outcome he wanted so he was happy. "I'm glad you changed your mind. Do you need help getting over him?"

She shook her head. "I will be okay."

Perhaps she had been thinking too much and making rash decisions because she was trying to suppress her own feelings. But now that she had let it pout, she suddenly felt much better.

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Meanwhile, at the beach.

After playing and snacking all day, the group raced back to the manor on four motorboats. Lin Jian and Ruby won this time. At the end of the day, Cheng Yu and Cedirc were the only ones who had not won at anything, earning teasing laughter from everyone else.

After eating dinner, everyone wanted to rest for a moment so Lanni used this chance to drag Xiehan aside.

"How is it going?" SHE asked curiously. He had asked a close friend to help with the investigation earlier.

Xiehan shook his head to indicate that there wasn't much progress. "He couldn't uncover anything aside from the fact that Ruby is not Neil Chan's real daughter. It still proves nothing."

"Why don't we have Ji Feifei take a DNA test? We can do the same for Ruby, I'm sure the results won't lie."

Xiehan thought about it and shook his head. "After telling us what she did, she is surely aware that we might have her go through a DNA test. If her tale is fake, who is to say that she will not conspire with the hospital to lie to us?"

"She doesn't have to know." She said meaningfully, her gaze trailing towards Ruby and Lin Jian who were playing at the terrace.

"What do you have in mind?" he asked even though he could pretty much guess it.

Lanni smiled at him mysteriously then rushed to the cellar and came back with a bottle of wine and two glasses. She then went to the terrace, beaming happily. "Is anyone up for drinks?"

Lin Jian shook his head when he understood that Lanni probably wanted to have a word with Ruby. "I would love to, but I just received a signal from Cedric. I'll let you girls start first."

"You..." Ruby was not able to stop Lin Jian on time, so she had to resign to her fate. What was Lanni up to this time?

"You want to talk to me?" She asked, hoping this was not another fight.

Lanni nodded with a complicated smile. "I realized that all this while, I had been misunderstanding you so I came to apologize. I'm so embarrassed for accusing you all those times."

"It's okay." Ruby shrugged even though it was not okay. She knew that there wasn't anything else that anyone would have thought of in that situation, but that didn't mean she was happy. All those accusations were indeed a little too much. She simply wanted Lanni to get to the point.

"Maybe we could drink and forget the past?" Lanni offered, looking genuine.

Ruby sighed. The last thing she wanted was to be at loggerheads with her future sister-in-law, so she nodded. "I guess I'll have to rely on you to protect me later. There's a big bad wolf on the loose."

Lanni giggled, knowing she was referring to Lin Jian. "Don't worry. Your brother will break his legs if he tries to take advantage of you when you are drunk."

Ruby felt a rush of indescribable emotions when she heard what Lanni had just said. Your brother...

Because she was trying to get Ruby to let down her guard, Lanni let her select her own glass as if proving that there was nothing wrong with any of them.

She then poured wine into both glasses and picked hers up, then clinched them. Seeing that Ruby was hesitating, she gulped her own wine down in a swig.

Ruby let her guard down when she was certain that there was nothing wrong with the wine. It wasn't so sure when she stopped trusting Lanni, and she knew that she was being ridiculous. Lanni was not a heartless person. Even if she didn't like her, she couldn't possibly hurt her. So she gulped down her own drink and refilled her glass.

In the end, the wine was much stronger than Ruby thought. Lanni could hold her liquor much better than the other, so Ruby was the first to pass out. It was within her expectations.

When she signalled him over, Xiehan went over to help Ruby to her room.

"Stay away!" Ruby instinctively threw a punch in her drunken daze. Obviously, she was still wary that someone could take advantage of her.

Xiehan patted her head. "It's okay. It's me."

"Brother?" She tamed down almost instantly, smiling as he let Xiehan help her up.

Lanni raised an eyebrow at the side. Did they still need a test?

## Chapter 379 - Reliable

When Xiehan returned, Lanni had just taken a cup of sobering tea and was no longer feeling as drunk as she was earlier. She looked excited when she saw him. "How did it go?"

In response, he opened his palm to her. She was excited when she saw the strands of red hair in his hand.

Actually, there were many ways in which they could have gotten Ruby's DNA sample but since they didn't want the latter or anyone else to know for now, this was the best way.

Securing the hair in a lock bag, Lanni also took the glass that Ruby was using a while ago. There was no harm in having two samples.

She then tiptoed and tried to pluck a strand of Xiehan's hair.

The man chuckled and leaned over to accommodate her height. "So casual? Aren't you going to distract me with a hug before you pluck my hair?"

Giggling at his excuse of asking for hugs, she kissed his lips. "Is this okay?"

He nodded, then saw that she had plucked two strands of his hair and shook his head immediately. "It's not okay. You only compensated for one strand."

Lanni was helpless at his childishness. "Such a profiteer. You won't even let go of this little benefit?"

"Nope." He grabbed her waist and kissed her deeply. He only let go when he felt her pushing him.

"We should hurry up and find a doctor as soon as possible." She urged and kept his sample in another lock bag.

"Don't worry about that. I already contacted a reliable friend of mine, we can give him the samples as soon as we go back to B City. Don't worry, he wouldn't betray me even at gun point."

"So efficient?" Lanni was awed by his speed. While she was running around like a headless chicken and battling time and thinking of what hospital would be most trustworthy, her man had already found one?

While they talked, she couldn't help asking, "What do you wish for the truth to be? Do you hope that she is really your sister?"

When he heard her question, his eyebrows formed a slight frown. He didn't think he needed a sister, especially considering the short part of his childhood that he had spent with Ji Feifei.

That girl was fond of destroying anything he liked and lying to their parents just to get him into trouble. Of course, he was not going to forget about how she had tried to hurt his girlfriend and boldly made a move on him.

But then again, it was probably because she knew from the start that she was not a member of the Ji family and that her only purpose of being there was to sow discord among everyone in that family.

At last, his expression remained indifferent. "I honestly don't care whether she is my sister or not. I just want to make sure that my family will not be taken advantage of."

Although that was what he said, a thin ray of hope lingered in his heart. If Ji Feifei was not really his sister, how nice that would be...

"Yo, Xiehan, we are waiting for you guys!" Lin Jian yelled through a window.

Lanni quickly kept away the seal bags and beamed. "Let's go."

In the living room, Lin Jian was frantically searching for a movie to watch while everyone stated their preferences.

After searching for about an hour, he wiped a bead of sweat from his forehead. "Why are you all so difficult? It's impossible to find a suitable movie for all of you!"

"What's wrong?" Lanni looked at the complaining man curiously.

As though he had seen a saviour, he flew over to her. "All these useless people have different preferences! Cheng Yu likes musical movies while Cedric likes action, Xingyu likes Sci-fi, I like fantasy... Right. Then there's Xiehan. Is there any particular genre he likes?"

"Horror." Lanni said through a laugh. "But although he likes horror, my darling will love whatever I want to watch and I will love whatever he wants to watch."

Lin Jian gave her a mean look then glanced at Luna. "You both love idol and teen romance, right?"

When Luna and Lanni both nodded, he looked momentarily relieved. "Finally a pair with similar interests. Why Don't you all pair into sets of twins? This will make work easier. Right, where is Ruby?"

Lanni was about to say that Ruby had fallen asleep when footsteps resounded from upstairs. Ruby had woken up and she walked downstairs, rubbing her eyes. She looked around and found that there was an

empty space between Xiehan and Cheng Yu. She so badly wanted to sit next to her brother... But she shook her head, recalling all the misunderstandings that had arisen when she tried to get close to him before. Hence, she walked over to Lin Jian's side.

The man seemed to remember something. "You were drinking with Lanni a moment ago... You fell asleep? How are you awake so soon?"

"Bad dream." She responded with two words and curled into Lin Jian's embrace like a scared child. She had actually dreamed that Ji Feifei and the people behind her had found out that she told Xiehan the truth, so they killed him for revenge.

Seeing this cingy side of Ruby, Lin Jian couldn't help patting her head comfortingly. If this was in the past, he would have used this chance to kiss her or flirt with her. However, he knew that such actions would only pass off as him playing around and not being serious about her so he restrained himself.

"Ahem..."

Everyone averted their gaze and tried not to distract this huge display of affection.

...

After searching for much longer, Lin Jian finally found a movie that everyone could watch.

It was a young adult-themed movie with a few elements of fiction and fantasy.

"I used up my brain juices to come up with this." Lin Jian declared. 'everyone, praise me' was written all over his face.

Cheng Yu, who had been drawing a comic on her tablet all this while, was the first to face-palm. "What's the huge deal? We could have just watched a random movie and those who don't like it would go to watch something else on their own."

"What do you know? It's multiple times more fun if it's all of us watching the same movie and enjoying it." Lin Jian shrugged.

Laughing, she glanced over at Ruby. "Your taste... Is quite unique."

Lanni and Luna joined in the fun of teasing Ruby but she merely shrugged with a laugh. "Well, as long as I ignore his endless nonsense, it's okay. Though sometimes I think his nonsense is too much to be ignored."

"What did you say?" Lin Jian looked at her like she was a heartless bandit who broke his heart. Even then, he was secretly celebrating. Ruby's words implied that she could be with him!

Happier than him was Ruby herself. After shunning her for ages, this was the first time that the people close to Lanni were taking the initiative to converse with her. They were even teasing her! She wondered whether it was because it was becoming more obvious that she liked Lin Jian.

The movie started out quite well but halfway through, the screen started to fill with horrific scenes.

"Ah! Monster!" Cheng Yu was so terrified that she leapt onto Cedric for protection, and she did not even realize it.

Similarly, Lanni buried her face in Xiehan's chest and only peeked at the screen through the slits of her fingers, while Ruby clung onto Lin Jian in tandem.

Luna looked at her friends speechlessly. "What are they so scared of?"

The screen was suddenly awash with bloody scenes. The men were still indifferent, while the girls were terrified. They even felt their bile build up, except Luna.

Xingyu glanced at her curiously. "You are not scared of such scenes?"



"Nope," She knew that they were fake, no matter how realistic they looked. Of course, everyone knew they were fake. But for her, what was so scary about it? The scenes she had witnessed in real life were multiple times scarier. In fact, whatever was on the screen was no different from child's play to her.

While Xiehan held Lanni in his arms to protect her and Lin Jian patted Ruby, the most joyous man in the room was definitely Cedric.

Cheng Yu was shrieking while glueing herself onto him so tightly that they almost morphed into one. Even when the scene changed to a calm one, she didn't let go.

When she returned to her senses, she couldn't help apologizing in embarrassment. "I'm so sorry!"

Cedric patted her with a gentle smile. "It's my job to protect you."

Cheng Yu's heart skipped a beat. When did Cedric learn to say such flirty and easily misunderstood words?

When she caught Lin Jian secretly giving him a thumbs-up, she finally understood. It must be that playboy's influence.. Indeed, one is marked by the company one keeps.

Chapter 380 - I Want A Baby Too

Night fell.

By the time the movie ended, it was already a little late.

"I'll go to sleep now." Luna yawned as she stretched sleepily. "I have become quite lazy lately.!"

Even she couldn't believe how clumsy she had gotten. In the past, she would stay up late effortlessly whenever she needed to, and it would not affect her performance the following day. However, lately, she still felt sleepy soon after she had dinner despite taking several naps during the day.

When Cheng Yu heard her lamenting, she laughed. "Of course you will be lazy. There are two of you now."

"Speaking of which, have you guys found out the gender of my little godchild?" Lin Jian couldn't help asking.

Xingyu hugged his fiancée as he answered, "We decided to find out when the baby is born."

Lin Jian couldn't take their displays of affection anymore. "Jeez... Ever since they became pregnant, they have been so lovey dovey. Luna clings to him now despite avoiding him like the plague in the past." He cradled his chin in serious consideration as he studied Ruby beside him. "I suddenly want to have a baby too!"

Ruby felt goosebumps rise on her skin. "Don't simply spout such words!" She rebuked.

Lin Jian glanced at her flirtatiously. "I didn't say I would make you the mother. Or could it be that you actually want to be the mum?"

"Shut up." Ruby blushed, her cheeks almost becoming as red as her hair.

"Eh? You are blushing. You think it would be awesome too, right? Actually, it's not a bad idea. You are so beautiful, our baby will definitely be adorable."

"Ahem... I was planning to finish up a few chapters of my comic before sleeping. I will take my leave first." Cheng Yu fled. This flirtatious man! If she continued listening to their conversation, it might soon turn R-18.

When Cedric heard her, he pretended to remember something. "I just remembered that we have a deadline. I have to submit the new volume in three hours. Adios!"

When Cheng Yu saw Cedric follow her into the room, she shot him a deadly glare. "Are you addicted to following me?"

Cedric smiled naturally. "Of course. We are sleeping in the same room now. Who else would I follow?"

She decided not to deal with him and walked to the bed. She sat in the middle of the king-sized bed and gathered her legs under her, then reclined on the white fluffy pillows. When she was comfortable, she took her tablet and continued painting her comic.

She was yet to be engrossed in her work when Cedric took off his indoor sandals and climbed onto the bed as well, settling right beside her.

She looked at him in shock. Although she didn't intend for him to sit on the floor, the bed was large enough to accommodate a whole family. Why did he have to sit right next to her? Inwardly groaning about having to shift from her comfortable position, she pulled the pillows supporting her back towards the edge and moved, leaving a large space between them.

She thought he would do his own thing but he dragged himself to her side, practically sticking onto her so she could feel his warm breath against her ear.

"What's wrong with you?" She instantly exploded.

He looked at her innocently. "I lack inspiration recently, so I wanted to read something else to refresh my mind. I'm sorry if that is a bother."

She still couldn't comprehend it. "Aren't there many comics on the app? You can read them."

"I have already read all the comics on the app." He responded.

She frowned and said, "Then download another comics app. I'm sure there are at least twenty of them in your application store."

"As an artist of Xia Yu comics, how can I run off to support our competitors?"

Cheng Yu would have called him out for making excuses, but her attention was caught by something else instead. If Cedric had finished reading all the available comics on the app, just how few were they?

She took out her laptop and checked the statistics immediately.

"This isn't good..." She mumbled.

"What isn't good?" He wondered.

She remained silent and continued focusing on the data. They had not recruited too many authors because it was just a startup company. However, now that she looked at it from a reader point of view, it was indeed a bit lacking.

There were only a few completed comics and most of them were either new or ongoing. It took long to complete a single chapter of a comic, so the readers had to wait for a long time before they could get an update of their favorite comics. The downside was that it was rare to find many comics of the same type, since they were overall few to begin with.

So, although they were getting many new users, the old ones left at almost the same pace. She had been wondering why despite the efforts of their marketing and the awesomeness of the application, the number of users was not increasing as fast as they had imagined.

"We didn't give enough attention to the long-term goals." She pointed out hers and Luna's mistake.

"Uhm... Could you speak human language?" Cedric could not make head or tail of what she was saying.

She slammed her laptop shut. "We need a marketing director. We thought we could do marketing on our own but from the look of things..."

Cedric didn't know when the topic suddenly shifted to the company but she had finally said something he could understand. "Did you say marketing director? Do you need me to introduce someone to you?"

"Thanks but no need. We will announce the vacancy when we go back to B City." She had yet to talk to Luna about this.

Cedric scratched his head. "I know. But have you considered the fact that Moonlight Studios is a new company? The first app is not even six months old yet, so everyone is still unsure whether it will gain a footing in the business industry or go bankrupt like many startup companies. Therefore, the candidates who will apply for the position are most likely to be those who have been seeking jobs in vain and have no choice but to try this new company. In other words, desperate people."

Cheng Yu tilted her head and looked up at him for the first time tonight. "That made a shocking amount of sense, considering it just came from your mouth."

She then contemplated for a moment. "But the person you will recommend...will they agree?"

He ignored her indirect insult and nodded. "Don't worry. She is very close to me. Actually it's my sister."

"She won't come." The ray of hope that had just lit up in her heart dimmed instantly. Why would Han Xiaoli agree to work under her? It would be good enough if she didn't cause trouble for her.

Cedric was stunned. How did she come to such a conclusion before even hearing the details? Before he could ask, he realized the reason. She must have thought he was referring to Xiaoli.

He cleared his throat to stop himself from laughing. "I'm not talking about Xiaoli. I know you don't like her."

"Then who?" She asked curiously. Did he have another sister?

"I have another sister, Natalie. However, she was born out of wedlock so the family does not recognize her. Putting this aside, she is the most talented marketing director you can ever hire. She has even worked for Feng Ji International before and only resigned because she wanted to get married."

Cheng Yu was in awe. "Natalie Han?"

"You have heard of her?" He found her tone amusing.

"Is there anyone who has not heard of Natalie Han? The golden hand of Feng Ji International, she graduated from a reputable university overseas and was even once the executive assistant of a European tycoon called Desmond Fort, before becoming the head of the marketing department of Preston and Fort Group." She sounded like she was talking about a god. After rambling on for a while, she paused and looked at Cedric suspiciously. "You are telling me that someone like her would agree to work for our puny little company? Are you kidding me?"

He grinned excitedly. "Why don't you let me give it a try?"

"I will need to talk to Luna first, though." Although she had as much right in the company as Luna did, she still didn't want to make such an important decision on her own and wanted to discuss with her first.

When she nodded, he was overjoyed. Great. Finally, he had a chance to prove that he was not useless.